

Connections

March 2007

Rahn Calls for Tougher Safety Belt Law

by Jeff Briggs

In his annual State of Transportation Address, Director Pete Rahn called on legislators to pass a primary safety belt law.

“It is time to act,” Rahn said. “We spend billions of dollars making our highway safer. Without spending a dime, we could save 90 lives each year. It is imperative that we make 2007 the year we [pass] a primary safety belt law and save those lives.”



Families of MoDOT employees lost in the line of duty in 2006 were recognized during the State of Transportation Address.

drivers are feeling the difference. “Our most traveled highways are safer. We have installed brighter, wider stripes; larger, easier-to-read signs; emergency reference markers; rumble stripes and me-

Rahn also noted a nationwide survey of truckers that ranked Interstates 44 and 70 in Missouri as the second and third most improved highways in the country.

“This is progress, but not victory,” he said. “Just last month, the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission approved the Better Roads, Brighter Future Program. If you thought the Smooth Roads Initiative was impressive, just wait until you experience this. Better Roads, Brighter Future is the Smooth Roads Initiative on steroids. This groundbreaking program will result in 5,600 miles of our busiest highways being smoother and safer by 2012.”

Rahn also touted MoDOT’s Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Plan, which will improve more than 800 bridges by 2012, and stated the need for further improvements, such as dedicated truck lanes on interstates 44 and 70 due to projected growth in passenger and large truck traffic.

In addition, Rahn warned the General Assembly that MoDOT’s current construction program of \$1.3 billion drops off a cliff in 2010, plummeting to \$569 million, which is slightly less than where we were prior to Amendment 3.

The full text and video of the speech is available online at www.modot.org.

MoDOT Launches \$245 Million kcICON Design-Build Project

by Jennifer Benefield

MoDOT now has the federal approval it needs to move forward with the \$245 million kcICON project, which will improve the Interstate 29/35 corridor from North Kansas City, over the Missouri River and into the downtown loop.

MoDOT received federal environmental approval on Jan. 12, giving District 4 the go-ahead to aggressively proceed with the highway improvements and a new landmark Missouri River crossing. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission approved the project in December 2005.

“The kcICON team has worked intensely for a year behind the scenes to be ready to launch our project as soon as we received the Record of Decision,” said MoDOT kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell. “Now we have less than five years to com-



plete a major highway project on time and within our fixed \$245 million budget.”

The kcICON team released a project proposal and began searching for contractor teams in January. At an informational meeting last month, representatives from 65 companies were provided a project overview and were allowed to ask questions about the project.

The MHTC is expected to select the winning proposal in September 2007. Design work will begin immediately, followed by construction as early as late fall 2007.

One of three design-build projects approved by the legislature, kcICON is scheduled for completion no later than Oct. 31, 2011. It will be delivered in about half the time it may have taken with MoDOT’s

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Speaker of the House Rod Jetton, left, and Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder applaud MoDOT Director Pete Rahn as he reports on the much-improved state of transportation in Missouri.

dian guard cables. As a result, 173 fewer people lost their lives in 2006. “According to *USA Today*, this 14 percent drop is the third largest decrease in traffic fatalities among all states and the District of Columbia. Now, that is a ranking of which we can all be proud.”

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annual visit to District 2

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Stripes Always in Style
District 4 named best striped district in state

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Lifesaver
District 5 worker rescues a man while clearing snow from roads near Hermann

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New and Improved
District 6 celebrates completion of major I-44 projects



Brighter Future Ahead
I-57 will be District 10’s first Better Roads, Brighter Future project

Don't Gamble With Your Life – Buckle Up

by Megan Mills

If you were told you have a one in 36 chance of winning the lottery - would you play? What if you were told you have a one in 36 chance of being killed in a traffic crash if you don't buckle up - would you take that gamble?

Safety belts save hundreds of lives each year. Buckling up is one of the best defenses against severe injury or death in a traffic crash. In the past three years, more than 3,600 people died in Missouri traffic crashes – 68 percent of them were not wearing a safety belt.

Safety advocates across Missouri are banding together as Primary Safety Belt Partners to spread the word about the importance of wearing safety belts. To join their cause or

show your support, visit www.saveMOLives.com or call 573-636-8167. Remember to Buckle Up to Arrive Alive.



MoDOT Advances to Electronic Bidding

by Bob Brendel

If you are walking through the lobby at Central Office sometime in the future, and you hear State Design Engineer Kathy Harvey reading bids aloud in an empty hearing room, please don't think she's lost her mind. It's just the result of the move to electronic bidding and how it will affect the monthly letting in the future.

In January, MoDOT began accepting electronic bids from contractors on a voluntary basis. MoDOT is now one of 25 transportation departments using the Internet technology to improve efficiency and accuracy for both contractors and the agency.

“It's more efficient for the contractors because they no longer need to travel to Jefferson City to attend the lettings

or to submit bids in person,” said Travis Koestner, bidding and contract services engineer. “No more finalizing bids in a hotel room on paper on a Thursday night, or worrying that a bid sent overnight will arrive late.”

With the new secure system, managed by Bid Express of Gainesville, Fla., contractors can prepare their bids in the comfort of their own office, with full access to all of their information, materials and subcontractors.

For MoDOT, “we get fewer errors, fewer late bids, and I think we'll see better bids because contractors will be preparing them with greater confidence in their numbers,” Koestner said. “The BidX folks told us that once a contractor submitted a low bid electronically they'd all be doing it.”

Several electronic submittals turned out to be the low bid in January when 45 percent of the bids MoDOT received arrived via Bid Express.

“We expect that number to continue to rise,” Koestner said. He related that the Kansas Department of Transportation had only one person attend its January letting since the vast majority of its bids were received via the Internet. KDOT went online last July.

As bids are read aloud in Jefferson City, which is required by state statute, they also appear on the Bid Express Web site (www.bidx.com). Contractors can still submit paper bids that are entered into the system as they are opened.

MoDOT has been implementing the system since April 2006 and worked

kcICON Project

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traditional design-bid-build process.

“We're blazing new trails with the first design-build highway project in the Kansas City area,” said Kidwell. “It's one of only three design-build pilot projects for MoDOT.”

For more information, visit the project Web site at www.kcicon.org.

KcICON Project Goals

- Deliver the Interstate 29/35 corridor improvements within the total program budget of \$245 million.
- Construct a landmark Missouri River bridge(s) that can be reasonably maintained to provide more than a century of useful service.
- Maximize safety, mobility, aesthetic and capacity improvements in the corridor.
- Engage stakeholders and the community to successfully develop and deliver the project.
- Meet or beat the project completion date of October 31, 2011.

with 10 pilot contractors for six months to test and hone the process. The cost of the system was \$81,000, which included setup and training. Future costs to operate and maintain the system are borne by the contractors who subscribe to the service.

Missouri Teens Conquer Battle of the Belt

by Laura Holloway

Missouri teens are not afraid of a challenge. They know the importance of buckling up, and now 17 high schools have the prize money to prove it.

More than 100 Missouri high schools participated in the statewide Battle of the Belt challenge from Oct. 1 – Nov. 30, 2006. These schools competed against each other to increase safety belt use among students and potentially save lives. The challenge involved an initial surprise safety belt check of students, followed by a peer-designed educational blitz and a final surprise safety belt check to determine if a change of behavior occurred.

Two winners were chosen from each of nine regions. Each regional winner received \$250, and two statewide winners received \$500.

Statewide winners were: Ava High School for highest seat belt use (100 percent); and Southern Reynolds Co. R-II High School in Ellington for the most improved seat belt use (a 46 percent increase). A list of all winners is available at www.savemolives.com.

The program was jointly sponsored by the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety and American Family Insurance. American Family provided the prize money for the competition.

“Over the years, the effectiveness of this program has been proven with more teens buckling up. We hope to continue this program and see even more of an increase among teens,” said Pam Holt, trauma prevention education coordina-

tor for St. John's Hospital in Springfield. Holt was a leader in encouraging the Battle of the Belt program in Missouri.

Teens are an important audience for safety belt messages. The Missouri Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the Missouri Safety Center, recently conducted a study showing only 56 percent of Missouri teenagers wear safety belts. From 2003-2005, more than 500 young people died in Missouri traffic crashes, and 75 percent were not buckled up.

Congratulations to all 2006 Battle of the Belt winners!



Ava High School students celebrate winning a statewide Battle of the Belt contest at an all-school assembly on Feb. 9.

New Tool to Make Workplace Safer, More Efficient

by Sally Oxenhandler

A car crash. Cancer. A heart attack.

Illnesses, injuries or conditions such as this could influence whether or not you can continue to perform or safely perform your job. A new program called Fit for Duty will guide the job review process when an employee potentially can no longer perform or safely perform the essential duties of his or her job. The program's goal is to keep all employees safe on the job and make sure the department operates as efficiently and effectively as possible.

“We want to take every measure we can to make sure employees don't get hurt on the job and don't hurt others,” said Beth Ring, Risk Management director. “Fit for Duty also allows us to meet the department's aggressive goals. We can't do that if someone is unable to perform or safely perform their essential tasks.”

Under the program, a Fit for Duty team made up of representatives from Human Resources and Risk Manage-

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Bridges to Missouri's Past

by Tom Gubbels

Under MoDOT's Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Plan, approximately 800 bridges will be repaired or replaced by 2012. This program will upgrade Missouri's road system and place most of the state's bridges in good condition. Many of the bridges that will be worked on under the Safe & Sound plan were built in the early years of the Highway Department.

Bridges built in the 1920s and 1930s were based on standard designs created by the Highway Department's Bridge Division. These standard designs assumed that Missouri's road system would be constantly upgraded and refurbished, so bridges were generally designed to be in use for no more than 50 years. However, many of these early highway bridges are still in use today, and they need to be replaced or rehabilitated in order to provide Mis-

sourians with a world-class transportation experience.

Before any bridges are replaced under the Safe & Sound plan, each individual structure will be reviewed to see if it is historically significant. Back in the 1990s, MoDOT conducted a survey of approximately 11,000 local- and state-owned bridges to determine which ones were historic due to their unique engineering, design or historic background. MoDOT identified nearly 400 bridges as historically significant. The Safe & Sound plan will impact several of these historic structures.

In October 2003 MoDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office and the Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation signed an agreement outlining the steps that would be taken to manage Missouri's historic bridges. Before a historic bridge can be demol-

ished, MoDOT must first make every effort to rehabilitate the structure so it can remain in use as a safe and efficient transportation facility. If there is no way to successfully rehabilitate a historic bridge, the department can also offer the bridge to another government entity or a private citizen for adaptive reuse in place or at a different location. When a historic bridge is turned over to a new owner, the recipient must accept responsibility for maintaining the structure's integrity.

In 1987, the federal government passed the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act, which encouraged state, city, and local governments to rehabilitate, reuse and protect historic bridges.

Since the mid-1980s, numerous historic bridges have been rehabilitated and reused throughout Missouri. For example, the city of St. Louis and

MoDOT worked together to rehabilitate the historic Eads Bridge and transform it from its original use as a railroad bridge across the Mississippi River into a pedestrian and light rail facility. In addition, historic open-spandrel arch bridges in Shannon and Newton counties have been preserved in place as pedestrian bridges.

Several other Missouri historic bridges have been moved from their original location so they could be reused. For example, a historic bowstring arch bridge owned by Caldwell County was airlifted to Polo, Mo., where it now serves as a pedestrian bridge across a small pond in a community park.

Finally, many of Missouri's historic bridges have been preserved "on paper" by thoroughly documenting their history. This approach is often used for larger structures that are difficult to reuse. MoDOT has recently documented the historic Hermann Bridge across the Missouri River. Four historic bridges that will be replaced during the reconstruction of Interstate 64 in the St. Louis area will also be preserved "on paper."

The management of Missouri's historic bridges is a MoDOT priority, and efforts will be made to protect any historic structures impacted by the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Plan.



Above: Branson Bridge in the 1902's. This is one of many spandrel arches in Missouri. Right: The concrete arch bridge at Reddings Mill in Newton County.



Snow Fighting Facts



A MoDOT worker helps load salt into this truck so the snowplow operator can clear roads following an early morning snow on Feb. 13. Keeping snowplows supplied with salt has been a busy job this winter.

Since 2000, MoDOT has used more than 240,000 tons of salt on average each year. That translates to more than 493 million pounds! If it were table salt, it would be enough to handle the yearly consumption of all Missourians, as well as our neighbors in Arkansas, Illinois, Oklahoma, Nebraska and Tennessee.

With last year's mild winter, only 97,000 tons of salt were used, saving MoDOT \$10 million. Already this winter, nearly 240,000 tons of salt has been spread, easily surpassing last year's amount with the potential for plenty more wintry weather yet to come.

MoDOT also uses 1,700 dump trucks to remove snow and ice. If you stacked

the trucks on top of each other, they would be as tall as 27 St. Louis Arches. During and after a storm, employees work in shifts around the clock to ensure roadways are kept as clear as possible. Over the last five winters, employees logged an average of more than 400,000 labor hours per year removing snow and ice.

Correction

In the February issue, the photo used with the chip seal contest article was incorrectly labeled as work being done on Barton County Route 126. The photo is actually of the work done on Jasper County Route FF.

New Tool
continued from p. 3

ment, with the Chief Counsel’s office providing legal advice as necessary, will perform a review of the employee’s ability to perform or safely perform the job when the district or division Human Resources or Risk Management representatives believe there might be a problem.

The review could include a medical exam, reviewing medical records, having the employee perform work-

simulated tasks and so forth. Each individual case will guide the review requirements. The team will take a look at the job responsibilities, the person’s situation and what the employee is capable of doing. Consulting with medical professionals where necessary, the team will then make recommendations to the employee’s district engineer or division head who will make the final decision on the course of action.

“We can’t and won’t use a cookie-cutter approach with these situations,” Ring

said. “Every situation will be treated with care, respect and privacy.”

Ring stresses that Fit for Duty is not a routine testing program, and employees will not be randomly selected for review. Nor is the Fit for Duty examination – the industry term most commonly used for evaluations conducted after someone is already on the job – related to the job studies Human Resources performs. It’s also not about periodic physicals. The Fit for Duty exam will only be given if something triggers the need, such as an injury, illness or condition.

“Something will have to have happened to cause an employee to be unable to perform or safely perform his or her job, such as a personal injury, illness or condition outside of work,” Ring said. “That’s the only time Fit for Duty will kick in.”

More information about Fit for Duty, including frequently asked questions, can be found on the intranet at *wwwi*, or you can visit with your Human Resources representative.

Performance Plus Takes Off
Two New Incentives Already In the Works
by Sally Oxenhandler

Last April we introduced a pilot program called Performance Plus to compensate employees for working better, faster and cheaper. Director Pete Rahn recently announced the pilot program’s success had paved the way for Performance Plus to become a permanent program beginning Feb. 1.

“I’m pleased with the cost savings and other benefits we’ve achieved with the Performance Plus pilot program and want to extend the same opportunity to other employees who develop ways we can save money and improve our work,” Rahn said. “Everyone benefits from this program. Tax dollars are saved and put toward other work, and employees get much-deserved cash incentives.”

The pilot program has saved more than \$8.5 million and provided incentives totaling about \$170,000 to 474 employees since it began April 1. The incentive, now called the Construction Cost Savings Incentive, compensates construction project office employees for achieving a final construction cost of 1 percent above the contract award amount (or less) on projects in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

In addition to the construction incentive, two additional Performance Plus incentives are under way. The Injury Reduction Incentive is designed to compensate employees for reducing work-related injuries and associated

costs. The Project Scoping and Estimating Incentive will benefit employees who accurately estimate project costs so that project award amounts are within 1 percent over the construction estimate and 5 percent under.

Employees can submit proposals for Performance Plus incentives twice a year. Proposals for 2007 are due by April 1 and Oct. 1. If you’re thinking about proposing a Performance Plus incentive, here are some basic requirements to keep in mind:

- You must meet all eligibility requirements, which can be found on the Intranet at *wwwi*.
- You must have the support of your district engineer or division leader/state engineer or another member of the senior management team.
- Your proposal must be directly linked to improving performance.
- Your proposal can’t compromise

- safety or quality.
- Your proposal has to pay for the incentives through cost savings to MoDOT.
- You must completely fill out the application form.

A team of MoDOT senior managers review all proposals and, if they meet all requirements, they are sent to senior leadership for final approval. Once approved, data collection begins and incentive payments are made to eligible employees when all targets are met. All Performance Plus programs, as well as the overall concept, are reviewed each year to make sure they are still providing value.

More information is available on the Intranet at *wwwi*. If you still have questions, contact Carissa Hutson, Organizational Results, at (573) 526-2119 or Carissa.Hutson@modot.mo.gov.

March Service Anniversaries

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40 Years		
Earl D. Bolin	D4	
30 Years		
Mark E. Heidlage	D7	
25 Years		
Steve A. Bradley	D3	
Theodore E. DeWolf	D4	
Robert L. Gillaspie	D4	
Kevin P. Shannon	D4	
Ralph M. Tull	D4	
20 Years		
Kim I. Gordon	D4	
Richard A. Knipp	D5	
Ronald R. Miller	D5	
Dennis D. Noblett	D5	
James R. Allen	D8	
Gregory D. Donoho	D8	

Patricia D. L. Evans	D8
Gary R. Sager	D10
Carroll W. Duncan	CO
15 Years	
Roger L. Anderson	D2
Orville D. Campbell	D2
Julie L. Neisen	D3
Joseph B. Schulte	D5
William L. Lord	D7
Sean L. Matlock	D7
Patricia R. Radley	D7
Darrell B. Goth	D8
Howard L. Henderson	D8
Darrel L. Hickman	D8
Steven R. Howell	D8
Russel C. Huckaby	D8
Vicki L. Wells	D8
Kenneth B. Adkins	D10
Jerry L. Frieze	D10
Jacob R. Bolinger	CO
Carolyn A. Hawks	CO

10 Years	
Darrel D. Butcher	D1
Rodney L. Milford	D2
Twila L. Tanner	D2
Robin E. Bartley	D5
Donald E. Boettcher	D5
Christopher E. Scott	D5
Kevin Williams	D5
Jason G. Aubuchon	D6
Roy E. Bigley	D6
Cheryl D. Tucker	D6
Melinda C. Allgood	D7
Ricky L. Black	D7
Christopher V. Calandro	D7
Jimmy L. Tallman	D7
David A. Evans	D8
Johnny L. Hall	D8
James D. Mussulman	D8
Deborah Stuart	D8
Michael S. Whittaker	D8
Michael R. Bouse	D9
Michael K. Moon	D9
Randy W. Sanders	D9
Christopher L. Huffman	D10

Robert C. Thomason	D10
Amy K. Bailey	CO
Thomas W. Fennessey	CO
Kevin D. Griep	CO
Robert J. Kraus	CO
Gary Overbey	CO
5 Years	
Keith A. Fountain	D1
Jeremy E. Furr	D1
Blake P. Noel	D1
Zackary T. Sims	D1
Darren L. Weigel	D1
Donald J. Trivette	D2
Herbert W. Walter	D2
Travis E. Williams	D3
Robert N. David	D5
Richard Murray	D5
Ryan M. Dingman	D7
Darren L. Knuckles	D10
Christopher N. Evers	CO

In Memoriam

Active Employee		
Joe W. Preyer	D10	Jan. 15
Retirees		
Jerry Meyerdirk	D1	Jan. 3
Harlan M. Million	D3	Jan. 6
Frank Schmugai, Jr.	D6	Jan. 8
Burl F. Beckham	D3	Jan. 14
Robert G. Nunez	D4	Jan. 16
William F. LaRose	D10	Jan. 28
Otha “Wilson” McDowell	D1	Jan. 29
George H. Stemmons	D5	Jan. 29
James E. Lewis	D4	Jan. 29
Dennis “Denny” E. Smith	D4	Jan. 30

January Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
David Mann	D8	36
Walter Summers	D6	22

Don’t Miss this Year’s Big Bash!

It’s time to mark your calendars for the annual No MOre Trash! Bash, coming up in April! The litter-prevention celebration is co-sponsored by the departments of Transportation and Conservation. The bash brings together thousands of volunteers who participate in a variety of trash clean-up events in April.

For more information on the upcoming events or how you can get involved, visit *www.nomoretrash.org*.



Shaun Schmitz

Director Pete Rahn met with a group of randomly selected employees to recap the State of Transporation Address and give them the opportunity to ask questions. More information is available on the Intranet at *wwwi*.



Central Office

Senior Managers Get Soaked for a Good Cause

by Sally Oxenhandler

MoDOT Chief Engineer Kevin Keith and Director of Program Delivery Dave Nichols took a walk on the wet side to raise almost \$8,700 for the 10-33 Benevolent Fund at the Missouri Asphalt Pavement Association's annual conference on Jan. 16.

The good sports agreed to be dunked in water that according to Keith "was about one degree above freezing" to raise money for the public charity that helps families of public service personnel, including highway workers, who have died in the line of duty.

The first six balls, three of which were auctioned off, brought in \$6,000. The rest of the balls cost \$25 a pitch. Representatives of Cutler Repaving, a national asphalt recycling company, bought 20 balls and distributed them to MoDOT employees to take a chance on dunking their two senior managers.

MoDOT employees who participated in the dunking expressed admiration at the pair's willingness to be dunked and gratitude for their efforts to raise money for such a good cause.

"It was very refreshing to see our senior management staff step up and allow themselves to be dunked for such a great cause," said Wendy Brooks, District 6 construction liaison. "I was fortunate enough to be able to throw a few balls at Kevin, and although the last ball I threw hit the target, he didn't drop into the water. With plenty of encouragement from the various contractors and fellow co-workers, I ran forward and pushed the button to drop him in. He and Dave were both

great sports about the whole event, and we appreciate their efforts."

Water for the dunking booth came from an outdoor faucet, making for a rather invigorating experience for the two men. Wearing swim trunks and a blue Amendment 3 t-shirt, Keith braved the water about a dozen times or "enough to be wet and cold."

"This ranks in my top five coldest moments," Keith said. "But for an hour's

worth of misery it was worth every penny we raised. I'd do it again in a minute."

Another senior manager at the event, Director of Systems Management Don Hillis, managed to stay dry throughout the dunking spree. Instead, he collected the donations and drummed up business to keep Keith and Nichols in the water.



Chief Engineer Kevin Keith takes the plunge.

All-in-One Resource Guide Developed

System Delivery Merges Engineering Manuals

MoDOT's "One Team" concept isn't just happening on our roadways and bridges. It's also being applied in various ways to our internal processes. Take for example, the Engineering Policy Group's latest efforts.

Last year, Chief Engineer Kevin Keith directed this group to incorporate all of the department's engineering manuals under a single, easily accessible electronic publication.

"The advantages of this approach are many," said Engineering Policy Admin-

istrator Joe Jones. "With all of the manuals combined into one resource there is a greater support for the 'one team' environment. We were also able to detect and correct inconsistencies in the definitions of some terms, which will ultimately help us to be more accurate in the field."

Following a tedious, year-long effort to combine the Right of Way, Design, Bridge, Construction, Traffic and Maintenance manuals under one cover, the Engineering Policy Group has unveiled the Engineering Policy Guide. The new publication provides

a fully functional, single reference for all engineering guidance; however, it is still "under construction." Much of the policy content is still being entered into the system, a task that will take most of the year.

Policies that can be found in the Engineering Policy Guide are legitimate and up-to-date and should be used as guidance. But according to Jones, "If the guidance you need can't be found in the system yet, you should continue to use your paper manual until the particular article becomes available.

"We encourage staff to 'test drive' this new resource and we welcome any constructive comments that may help make this new guide even more user friendly."

The Engineering Policy Guide is available on the MoDOT Web site at <http://epg.modot.org>. A help article, which is located on the home page, provides tips on how to use the guide.

Rahn Inspects Bridges for a Day

Last fall Director Pete Rahn won an internal competition to raise money for the state Charitable Campaign. As the winner, he agreed to perform the duties of a bridge inspector for a day, so he traveled to District 3 at the end of January. There he met with employees and made a very cold site visit to the Mark Twain Lake Bridge on Route 107.



District 3 employees brief Pete Rahn about problems with the Mark Twain Lake bridge on Route 107 that occurred last October. They also shared information about what was done to repair the bridge pier and deck.

for more info

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D1

Northwest

What Does \$200 Million Look Like?

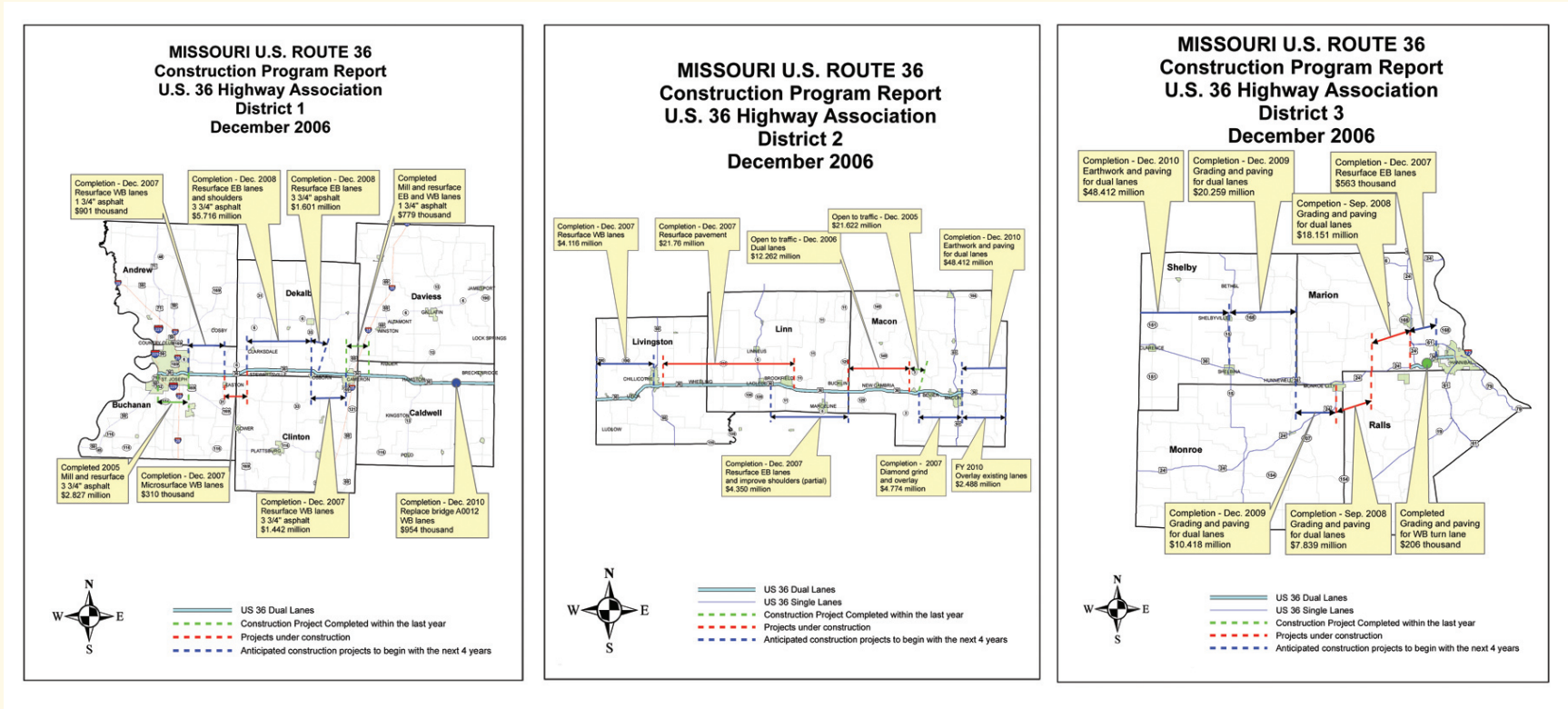
by M. Elaine Justus

The Better Roads, Brighter Future program is a big concept to get your head around. We know it encompasses improving 3,200 miles of our major road systems in the next five years, and we know it follows closely on the heels of our “Smooth Roads Initiative” that successfully repaired 2,200 miles of

Missouri’s busiest roads (a year ahead of schedule, thank you very much). The total cost for this ambitious project is estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$1.1 billion and will bring 85 percent of Missouri’s major highway system up to good condition by 2011. To make this a little easier to understand, let’s break

it down to one highway, Route 36, that stretches from the Mississippi River to the Missouri River and covers the northernmost three MoDOT Districts. The plan is to change Route 36 from being the “most mentioned” highway in the Customer Service Database (and we don’t mean that in a good way) to being

the most improved corridor in the state. Local publications are already addressing the long-anticipated improvements as being a change that “could bolster the region’s economy.” This one highway alone will receive 18 percent of the total funds for Better Roads, Brighter Future or approximately \$200 million.



Daddy, Where Do Engineers Come From?

by M. Elaine Justus



Torria, 10; Camarie, 8; Kavan, 4; and Ian, 6 (the children of District Construction and Materials Engineer Troy Slagle and his wife Stacia) pose proudly next to their handiwork.

Troy Slagle

The children of District Construction and Materials Engineer Troy Slagle had one simple goal during the recent snowstorm: to make a snowman. The end result was an engineering marvel: a wonderful, eight-foot tall behemoth complete with orange cap. It wasn’t until they were done, though, that they noticed a certain paternal familiarity about their artwork. When they stood their father next to the finished product, it was obvious. The similarity between the original and the final product is striking: the steely eyes, the enigmatic smile, the stylish hat, the height to width ratio. But is there something more important being proven here: the age old question of genetics versus environment?

Is it possible that once again, we have physical proof that engineers are made, not born? You be the judge.



Camarie Slagle

Troy Slagle and youngest son Kavan stand next to the finished product.

for more info

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E-mail margaret.justus@modot.mo.gov
3602 N. Belt Highway
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399

D2

North Central

Chatting with the Chief

Chief Engineer Kevin Keith recently made his semi-annual visit to the district. Kevin spent the day with members of the management team discuss-

The team loaded up for a road trip across Route 36 to Route 65 in Chillicothe showing Kevin the good, the bad and the ugly. The good was the new



Operations Engineer Travis Wombwell explains the incident response plan to Chief Engineer Kevin Keith.

ing topics from practical design to the Better Roads, Brighter Future initiative.

One of the things Kevin stressed was the importance of the systematic approach with SRI and the Better Roads programs. He discussed how repairing our major roads first, where the majority of the traffic is located, will give our customers smoother pavements and safer roadways where it is needed the most. He also said we are not forgetting our minors, they will also receive the attention they need once our major roads are in the condition we need them to be in.

four-lane section of Route 36, which opened to traffic last December in Macon County; the bad and ugly was the rough pavement that will be receiving a new surface this summer. Kevin saw first hand how delighted our customers are going to be when Route 36 is resurfaced.

The day concluded in the district's command operations center for incident response, where Kevin was given an overview of the center and the district's incident response procedure.

Ready for Action

Although Chief Engineer Kevin Keith's visit to the district wasn't an emergency, quick action was taken to launch District 2's Incident Response Standard Operating Procedure before his visit.

In January, District Engineer Dan Niec met with members of his staff to discuss implementing an SOP for any incident that might occur in the district. The idea was to have explicit direction on what actions should be taken during any unplanned incident on our roadways.

During that meeting ideas on who, what, where, why and how were decided. The result was a clear understanding of what the SOP should look like.

Operations Engineer Travis Wombwell led a team to put all of this together. With Kevin's visit approaching, the team sprung into action so he could be the first to see the SOP and command center.

Three priorities were set in place with concise definitions for each: Priority 1 - Statewide Incident, Priority 2 - District Incident and Priority 3 - Area Incident.

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Kevin talks with District Engineer Dan Niec and District Design Engineer Paula Gough.

Details such as who is in charge, what actions should be taken, who should be contacted and what the reporting and communication requirements would be were established for each priority.

Once the SOP was complete, the next step was to decide on a location to set up a command center.

The training room in the basement of the district office complex was the perfect spot. The room is large enough to house all documents, maps and communication tools necessary to run the center during an incident. Video conference, television and computers allow the center to be "plugged in" for communications. If the power is out that's not a problem, as a backup generator will keep the technology running.

Just outside the door of the training room is the area that houses the base radio, dedicated phone line, satellite telephone system, computer and fax machine. The dedicated phone line will allow the district to receive calls even if the switchboard system is down. The phone was even painted red to indicate the importance of that phone line, and just because it looks really cool! This area will also stay up and running thanks to the generator.

With the SOP and command center in place, the next step was to equip the center with anything and everything that could be needed during an emergency. The team really did think of everything from employee contact information to battery-operated lanterns.

The list includes over 30 items. Some of those items are:

- Equipment list, including non-fleet items (by building).
- Map of District 2 span bridges indicating load limited and one-lane bridges.
- Statewide Incident Response Plan
- Statewide I-70 Incident Response Plan.
- D2 Earthquake Response Plan

- Media contact information
- Map indicating law enforcement, ambulance, fire and school district boundaries.

"I just want to thank everyone who worked with me to get all of this in place," said Wombwell. "We wanted to have things ready for Kevin's visit so he could see first hand that our district is ready for any emergency that might come our way."

Those who worked with Travis on this project were: Dale Niece, Pam Mettes, Larry Ballew, Dan Skouby, Steve Barteau, Joey Hinton, Jason Milhollin, John Bales, Dave Oliver, Joe Carter, Chuck Schumann, Paula Gough, Carla Farrington, Vickie Ray, Teresa Hall, Sandy Riley, Tammy Wallace and Dan Niec.

When the work was complete the SOP was communicated to all employees who would be involved from maintenance to customer service so everyone knows what role they will play should an incident occur.

So what did Kevin think about the plan? He thought it was a good step forward. He encouraged us to share our SOP with the other districts and to work closely with the districts, central office and the highway patrol during any incident affecting our system.

All of the items, with the exception of the communication resources, are stored in the training room closet ready to be activated on a moment's notice. Now that we're ready, the district is hoping no incident occurs that causes us to fully utilize the capacity of the command center.



Maintenance Superintendent Dale Niece is one of the district's incident commanders for winter operations.

D3

Northeast

Natural Resource Helps Out Snow Budget

Crews from all over northeast Missouri took advantage of the lull in the winter weather to accept a gift from the Corps of Engineers ... loads and loads of sand.

"The sand had been drudged from the Mississippi River and had been sitting there for several years," explained Maintenance Superintendent Randy Shubert. So Randy let the rest of his co-workers know in the district, and the "big haul" began!

"The sand piles make our trucks look like tonka toys," Randy said. "We

asked the Corps if we could use it, and with their permission, we proceeded."

Crews have been using the sand to fight the winter, and it has helped out on the budget. "It's hard to define exactly how much has been saved, but we can use this in place of salt on many roads," Randy said. He concluded by saying MoDOT would probably be able to use it for the next two winters at least, and possibly even use it for patching and sealing this summer.

Thanks to our friends at the Corps for sharing this natural resource!



Dennis Lorenson of Monroe City prepares his truck for loading sand that was given to MoDOT from the Corps of Engineers.

Ice and Snow Don't Get the Best of Northeast Missouri



What does a shattered MoDOT truck window, ice boots, and building improvements have in common? They are all effects of the intense ice and snow presented this winter in northeast Missouri.

Teens Are Big Winners When They Buckle Up!

The Warrenton Warriors are winning the war against teen fatalities by buckling up, and they have the money to prove it! The high school was the regional winner for the Battle of the Belt competition, and American Family Insurance, who sponsored the program along with the Missouri Coalition for

Roadway Safety, presented the teenagers with \$500 to thank them for their efforts. The high school effort was led by the Team Spirit students, which is a program sponsored by Highway Safety. The students plan to purchase permanent signs for their high school reminding students to wear the belts.



The NE Regional Blueprint Committee participated in one of the largest Teen Health Fairs in the region by offering interactive questions on a computer and inviting students to sign up if they had been saved by the belt. More than 1,000 kids went through the fair.



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(Top left) Laura Tannehill, Warrenton maintenance, was a little shaken up but not hurt when a chunk of ice flew off the car in front of her and into her truck's windshield, spattering glass all over as she drove down Route 19. "My lunch was ruined!" she said as she now laughs about the incident which could have been much worse.

(Middle left) Mark Giessinger waged a war against the ice to save a cow on his farm by inventing his own 'ice boots.' "My son and I screwed plywood to the boots [see inset] so we could hike down a hill to feed a calf who couldn't make it up on the ice."

Not to be outdone, the Eolia maintenance guys improved



efficiency at their building by constructing a loft for oil storage and other supplies.

(Left) Rick Skirvin, Gary Peasel and Ray Smith are pictured in the loft, which features an opening so that they can easily load and unload from the loft using a hydraulic lift.

D4

Kansas City Area

District 4 Seals the Chip of a Deal

Chip Seal Challenge Proves Great Benefit

by Kerri Lewis

District 4's north crew won first place in a newly initiated statewide competition – the Chip Seal Performance Challenge, which began in August of 2006. Although all competing teams did a wonderful job, the District 4 north crew hit the jackpot, receiving the grand prize for using a fine aggregate mixture to make Route C in Clay County safer and smoother for motorists.

Congratulations to the winning team: Ronald Denson, intermediate crew worker; Douglas Patton, maintenance specialist; Derrick Patton, seasonal maintenance worker; Gregory Young, seasonal maintenance worker; Randall Easley, intermediate crew

worker; Billy Glazier, local maintenance supervisor; Dan Watkins, maintenance specialist; Damon Rinehart, seasonal maintenance worker; Wesley Squire, senior crew worker; Robert Foster, intermediate crew worker; Jeffery Taylor, senior crew worker; Darren Barker, maintenance specialist; Vicki Hass, maintenance specialist; Kelley Anspach, senior crew worker; Lary Duffey, maintenance specialist; Ray Ruth, senior crew worker; William Shenkner, assistant maintenance supervisor; Jimmie McBee, senior crew worker; Dennis Cummings, intermediate crew worker; and Larry Boesch, maintenance specialist.



Route C, Clay County before the resurfacing job was completed.



District 4 north crew workers safely laid the chip seal before completing the project.



The completed project earned the District 4 north crew the number-one ranking for the fine aggregate category in the Chip Seal Performance Challenge.

Stripes Are Always in Style

District 4 Named Best Striped District in State

by Kerri Lewis

MoDOT has taken justifiable pride in the Smooth Roads Initiative, and this is evident when anyone travels one of the program's 2,200 miles of roadway across Missouri. Smoother roads with brighter pavement markings mean a safer journey for all drivers.

Drivers have noticed the changes. According to the 2007 Tracker Report, the percent of striping that meets customers' expectations in roadway visibility is 95.4 percent across the state. This is the highest percentage in the past two years.

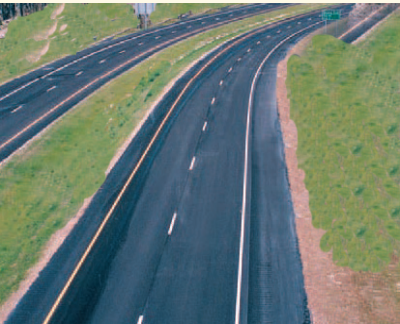
District 4 can take pride in this number: The Kansas city area received a rating of 99.1 out of a possible 100 on major routes striped throughout Missouri – the best such rating among all districts. The Kansas City district also received a very high rating on the minor roads.

Improvements to the roadway striping have increased safety for drivers, including night driving. This is due to using high build paint with a positive measure of retroreflectivity or

visibility of the striping. Visibility is measured by the amount of light from the vehicle headlights that is returned to the driver. Using high build paint on both major and minor roadways results in longer life expectancy and helps lower striping maintenance costs in the long run.

Pavement markings must be uniform in design, placement and application throughout the highway system to make drivers aware of upcoming conditions. Imagine just how difficult it would be to maintain a safe roadway without the use of pavement markings or striping along major routes or freeways.

Giving drivers a guide to travel safely is a priority. The customer satisfaction numbers prove the effort is working.



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D5

Central

Worker Rescues Man During Snowfight

by Holly Dentner

“I can’t drive past anybody.” Janet Edler’s philosophy for snowfight may have saved a man’s life. When she was plowing snow along Route 100, just east of Hermann in Gasconade County, she saw a small pickup truck on the side of the road, engine running. It was 5:30 a.m. on Jan. 21, and she’d been working the night shift clearing the state routes.

“I drove by really slow, and I wasn’t sure anyone was in the truck until I was almost past it,” said Edler, a maintenance worker at the Drake maintenance building. “I could see someone slumped over between the door and the steering wheel.”

She knew something was wrong when the man didn’t respond to her knocking on the window. Another passerby stopped to help, and the two of them attempted to get the man out of the truck. He was beginning to regain consciousness, but was incoherent.

Janet said that once the man was outside the truck, his condition improved quickly. She then realized the truck cab must have been filled with carbon monoxide. Janet went to call

cal attention. He said he only lived a half mile down the road, and the other passerby took the man home.

“It all happened so fast,” Edler said. “When I got back to my truck I realized I was scared to death. I’ve heard stories about people who die when the snow traps the exhaust in the car, so I always stop when I see a vehicle on the side of the road.”

Jim Honse, maintenance superintendent for the area, was glad Janet stopped to see if anyone was in the truck.

“She should be recognized for what she did,” said Honse. “If Janet hadn’t stopped, that man could have died.”

Janet only recently joined MoDOT full time, after working as a seasonal employee for a year. She says she knows her coworkers would have done the same thing, and that’s one of the reasons she likes working here.



TV Show Adds MoDOT to Schedule

10



Area Engineer Bob Lynch expands MoDOT’s media presence by talking with a new Lake area television station, OzarkTV. He appears every Monday morning on their live weekday morning show. During Lynch’s segments he talks about local construction and upcoming MoDOT projects. Bob can also be heard every Monday on KRMS Radio, 1150 AM in Osage Beach, to discuss current transportation matters.

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Inspections Keep Buildings Safe

by Holly Dentner

A small caravan of MoDOT vehicles made its way around the district, not to assess roads or monitor traffic, but to take care of another important duty: building inspections. During January and February every building in the district was inspected for safety, equipment and environmental issues.

Internal inspections take place on a yearly basis so employees can work in a safe and productive environment. Employees from risk management, operations, building maintenance and general services conduct the inspections to see that all aspects of the buildings are up to regulation.



“I didn’t really have any idea about what its like at the maintenance buildings,” said Brenda Dudenhoeffer, senior risk management technician. “But I was pleased to see how much pride our maintenance workers have for their work and equipment.”

Assistant District Engineer Eric Schroeter said the inspections went very well.

“We examine each building from top to bottom,” said Schroeter. “This year we found no major concerns and many of the minor findings were corrected right on the spot.”

Regional Maintenance Supervisor Dale Baumhoer and Safety and Health Manager Chris Engelbrecht make their way through the Jefferson City maintenance building in late January.

Retirees Have 211 Combined Years of Service with MoDOT

Glen Jones retired Dec. 1, 2006, after 26 years at MoDOT. He was a senior construction inspector at the Jefferson City project office when he retired. He began his career with MoDOT at the Columbia project office, where he worked for about eight years, and spent the remaining years in Jefferson City. Glen and his wife live in Jefferson City. He says he plans to spend a lot of time riding the Katy Trail.

Eddie Thompson, regional maintenance supervisor in Camdenton, retired Jan. 1 after 32 years with MoDOT. Eddie worked as a crew worker, senior crew worker, and local maintenance supervisor, and worked in District 8 before joining the Camdenton crew. He plans to spend his retirement with his wife on their farm near Eldridge.

Skip Dunnaway retired Feb. 1 after 32 years of service. He worked at the Jefferson City project office, starting out as a program support assistant and construction technician. At the time of his retirement he was an intermediate construction inspector.

Kenneth Kliethermes retired on Feb. 1 as a senior crew worker in Linn. He worked for MoDOT for 23 years. He held crew worker, crew supervisor, bridge inspector and bridge crew leader positions during his time at MoDOT. Kenneth doesn’t plan to rest in retirement, as he began a new full-time job as a truck driver for a private company.

James Miller retired on Feb. 1. He served as a senior construction inspector in the Jefferson City office at the



Glen Jones, James Miller, and Skip Dunnaway got a limo ride to work on their last day on the job at the Jefferson City project office.

time of his retirement. He had worked as a construction technician, senior survey assistant and construction assistant during his 29 years with the department.

Palmer Ott retired March 1 after 39 years of service with MoDOT. He started as a crew worker at the sign and signal shop in Jefferson City and worked his way up to maintenance superintendent of the Jefferson City maintenance building. Palmer has a farm near Lohman and plans to spend his retirement working there and entertaining his granddaughters.

Terry Redel, central office shop supervisor, retired March 1 after 30 years at MoDOT. He started work as a structural steel painter for the Central Office bridge crew. Terry went back to school and earned his associate’s degree in automotive technology. He came back to MoDOT as a service attendant, shop mechanic, field mechanic and became shop supervisor in 1995.



D6

St. Louis Area

MoDOT Celebrates Completion of Two Major Projects on I-44

Projects are Near Pacific and Gray Summit

by Kara Price

District 6 employees recently celebrated the completion of two major projects on Interstate 44 near the city of Pacific and Gray Summit with a ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony.

The event, which took place Feb. 9 at the Pacific City Hall with the media and public present, featured District 6 Engineer Ed Hassinger as the Master of Ceremonies.

Hassinger said that dedicating these projects is great news for Franklin County motorists. "These two developments will improve the aesthetics as motorists enter into Franklin County in addition to improving the safety and capacity on I-44," Hassinger said.

The projects both have a long and rich history in trying to be rebuilt. As the population grew and traffic increased at these locations, various safety issues arose. The previous lanes had some growing pains and it was apparent that

something needed to be done to respond to that growth. After several public meetings, MoDOT moved forward with these projects, which are actually two of several developments MoDOT completed during 2006 in this county.

The project near the city of Pacific began in the summer of 2004. Motorists



MoDOT employees and local elected officials mark the dedication ceremony by cutting the ribbon to celebrate the completion of two major projects on Interstate 44.



MoDOT employees in District 6 that played a significant role in the success of the two major projects on Interstate 44.

will notice that an additional lane was built in both directions of I-44 from the St. Louis County line to the Pacific exit. The existing four lanes were rebuilt as well as the bridges over Route OO and Viaduct Street. Crews opened the new and improved lanes in late 2006. This project was one of the first to use the interactive work zone signage within the St. Louis area.

The new Gray Summit interchange on Route 100 at I-44 began in the spring of 2006. It was built due to the old bridge having only two narrow lanes. The new bridge now has four lanes along with signals at the off and on ramps. New acceleration and deceleration lanes onto I-44 were also constructed.

Officials who spoke at the ceremony included: Jenni Riegel, office of U.S. Rep. Kenny Hulshof; State Sen. John Griesheimer; State Rep.

Brian Nieves; County Commissioner Ed Hillhouse; Pacific Mayor Herbert Adams; Pacific Police Chief Jim Brune; and Fire Chief Rick Friedmann, Pacific Fire Protection District.

During the dedication ceremony, Hassinger thanked everyone involved with these projects. He specifically recognized MoDOT employees Tom Montes and Tim Schroeder, project managers; Judy Wagner, area engineer; Tim Helbusch, resident engineer; Lise Susnic, lead inspector for the Pacific project; James D. Kelley and Rick Branson, lead inspectors for the Gray Summit project; and all employees at the St. Clair project office. Hassinger also thanked local elected officials, contractor Millstone Bangert Inc., subcontractors and design consultants for these two projects.

"Due to many years of dedication and hard work, Franklin County now has new and improved lanes as well as a better interchange on I-44," Hassinger said.

District 6 Traffic Operations Engineer

by Greg Owens

Drivers on two stretches of highway in the greater St. Louis metropolitan area will now spend less time stopped in traffic and use less fuel since district traffic operations engineers improved the coordination between signals along the route. The project, completed in December, optimized the synchronization and timing of 16 signalized intersections on Route 67 between Interstate 270 in Hazelwood and New Halls Ferry Road in Florissant, as well as 23 signalized intersections on Route 141 south of Big Bend Road to Route 21 in Jefferson County.

Optimization is a process that analyzes coordinated traffic signals by determining the most efficient amount of time a signal displays green for each movement, which is based on traffic demand

to reduce driver's delay. Optimization is also based on when to start the green time during each cycle for the main direction of travel at each signal, so it improves synchronization. Vehicles that travel through the corridor at or near posted speed limits move faster through signals and stop fewer times. This reduces vehicle emissions and saves time and gasoline.

Optimizing traffic signals, especially during peak hours, can be a challenge. The timing that works best for morning traffic may not work for evening traffic during peak hours, off-peak hours or on weekends. People working on optimization projects have to look at which direction traffic is moving during various times of the day and adjust signal timing as necessary. Optimization does not eliminate all backups at every

intersection along a corridor, but it does provide for a measurable improvement to the flow of traffic without a high-cost construction project.

According to reports completed in January, the optimization reduced stops along Route 67 by more than 40 percent. For instance, the average number of times drivers stopped in evening traffic during peak hours decreased from:

- 13 stops to seven stops along northbound Route 67 - 46 percent less
- Nine stops to six stops along southbound Route 67 - 34 percent less

The reduction in stops resulted in higher average speeds along the corridor. For example, average traffic speeds increased from:

- 20 to 24 mph during morning peak traffic hours - an 18 percent increase
- 14 to 20 mph during evening peak traffic hours - a 41 percent increase

These average speeds are not indicative of vehicle speeds throughout the corridor since they also include the time vehicles spent stopped at signals.

Signal optimization on Route 141 reduced stops by more than 35 percent.

For instance, the average number of times drivers stopped in morning traffic during peak hours decreased from:

- 10 stops to six stops along northbound Route 141 - 40 percent less
- 10 stops to five stops along southbound Route 141 - 51 percent less

The reduction in stops resulted in higher average speeds along the corridor. For example, the average speed increased during morning peak traffic from:

- 28 to 34 mph on northbound Route 141 - a 21 percent increase
- 32 to 39 mph on southbound Route 141 - a 22 percent increase

This signal optimization project should also reduce the overall fuel consumed by vehicles traveling on the optimized section of Route 67 by nearly 353,000 gallons per year and the optimized section of Route 141 by nearly 728,000 gallons per year. With an average fuel cost of \$2 per gallon, drivers should save nearly \$2.2 million annually in these sections.

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D7

Southwest

Strap on Your Chaps

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

Safety gear is mandatory for all safety-sensitive positions, with good reason. Just see the picture below.

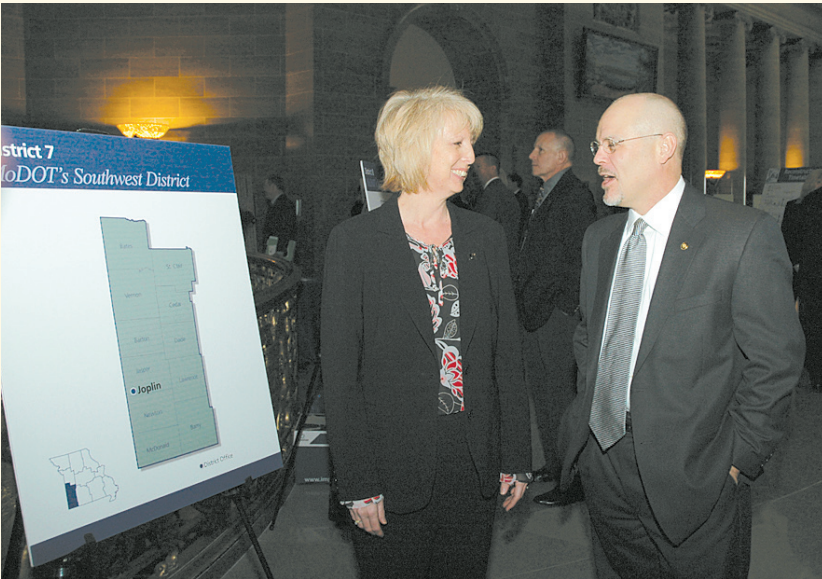
The employee wearing these chaps was trimming trees in a bucket truck. The



bucket operator was on the truck below where he couldn't hear the employee in the bucket too well, and he moved the bucket before the trimmer was ready. The trimmer dropped the chainsaw and it hit his upper thigh. It went through a couple of layers on the chaps before the thick fabric killed the chainsaw.

These chaps will be thrown away now that they're damaged. But District Safety and Health Manager Gary Clinton said, "We can buy a lot of chaps for the cost of that one injury."

Transportation Day



District 7 District Engineer Becky Baltz enjoys a laugh with Representative Kevin Wilson (District 130) during Transportation Day on Feb. 7. Wilson visited the district displays in the rotunda shortly before the State of Transportation Address.

Fighting the Weather Together

Mt. Vernon Maintenance Supervisor Randy Washam and his crew received the following compliment from Highway Patrol Sgt. John Cyrus:

"Randy and all the guys at the Mt. Vernon building during the last couple of weeks have really stepped up and accommodated the Highway Patrol, Zone 06, in any way we might have needed. They supplied heaters, power cords, a generator and gas. We would

have been totally shut down at the zone office if not for their efforts. As a result of their dedication and hard work during the snow and ice storm, the number of accidents were kept to a minimum on I-44 and secondary roadways. They assisted us with traffic on the interstate when the power companies needed to string new lines across the interstate. The working relationship we have in this area is above and beyond what is expected, and it is greatly appreciated."

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Chip Seal Winners Get Their Money

MoDOT Director Pete Rahn was in Lamar on Feb. 2 to present the chip seal contest winners their \$5,000 "check" to be split among the winners.

Pictured from left to right are Maintenance Superintendent Tim Rice, Lamar Senior Crew Worker Justin Jeffries,

Lamar Assistant Maintenance Supervisor Dan Caruthers, Golden City Maintenance Specialist Ted Lessman, Sheldon Maintenance Supervisor Allen Bley and Director Pete Rahn.

Congratulations to the winners!



Twelve Attributes of Pete's Safety Belt Stance

by Lori Marble

ended a lecture presented by a ions representative for Hall-s. Her talk was on the 12 s of Great Products. In many y are things we instinctively y are what compel us to re-e 12 attributes include: worth, riginality, artistry, story-tell-ries, relevance and sensory : timeliness, range, variety l mass. t 7 we chose Feb. 2, Ground-s our day for Director Pete dia tour in promotion of the y Safety Belt initiative. From p at one of our district's y newspapers, it was clear y butes were in play. There's no way to devalue the *worth* of saving 90 lives a year. By its very nature the topic is *emotional* and Pete provided the *originality* with his frankness and openness when talking with the report-ers.

Artistry is often evident when watching someone do something they are really good at. We were all taking notes and adding to our own personal repertoire of analogies when listening to Pete.

The day was divided in half with two of our coalition partners. Their personal insights and localized experiences provided reporters with the *story-tell-ing* and *memories* that supported the *relevance* of the Primary Safety Belt message to their media's audience.

It was interesting listening to the editors and reporters as they became drawn into the interviews themselves. Without exception they offered their own *sensory experience* to the equation, relating an event they had either

been involved in personally or covered for a story where the use or nonuse of safety belts played a major role. Each in turn recalled physical sensations, sights and sounds relevant to the ex-perience that further illustrated Pete's stance.

Legislative calendaring provided one avenue of *timeliness*; a couple of re-porters also noted the recent tragic loss of life due to the lack of wearing safety belts. In an 11-county district it was impossible to cover all the media out-lets we would have liked, but we did spread our visit out from north to south. Simple community differences pro-vided the *range* and *variety* while the continuity of the information presented was maintained simply by the strength of the message.

As more of these media events are completed, the 12th attribute of *critical mass* will become increasingly evident. The editorials and reports fueled by the face-to-face visits will launch water cooler discussions and small group debates. Media sites that were unable to speak with Pete directly will further their own viewpoint on the Primary Safety Belt initiative. This initial cov-erage will then lead to additional cov-erage and front-of-the-mind awareness as the issue moves through the legisla-tive process.

In the movie "Groundhog Day," Bill Murray plays a reporter who finds he repeats the same day over and over until he finally gets it right. Unlike the movie, our Feb. 2 media tour was a one-shot deal. There were no opportu-nities for "do-overs." None were need-ed. All the 12 attributes were there and the positive media reactions are still rolling in.

D8

Springfield Area

DE Dale Ricks: “A Wonderful Ride”

by Bob Edwards

Dale Ricks always enjoyed the math and science of engineering. Yet when he looks back on his MoDOT career, it’s not numbers he talks about. It’s the human side of the equation.

“I love the people. Our employees are just fantastic,” Ricks said, who retired March 1. He was reflecting on his 25 years of service, including the last five years as district engineer in District 8/Springfield.



Ricks

Ricks is pleased that MoDOT has become more employee-friendly, with improved benefits and working conditions and better equipment. It helps employees personally and professionally.

He has enjoyed working with the public and the officials who represent them, even on tough issues.

“We look for ways to come up with solutions to the problems,” he said.

One of Ricks’ main assignments from Chief Engineer Kevin Keith was to focus on MoDOT’s relationships with legislators and local officeholders.

“He has done so,” said Keith, pleased with the outcome.

As Jim Anderson put it, “He is so responsive.” Anderson is Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce president and a member of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission.

Beyond that, Keith said Ricks deserves credit for championing three major expansion projects along Route 65 between Branson and the Missouri-Arkansas line and advancing the I-44/65 reconstruction in Springfield.

Ricks said he is proud to have helped get the Route 60/65 interchange rebuild going. He derived satisfaction working with the public to come up with an acceptable way to build a new bridge on Route 160 near Ash Grove. He is happy to have begun developing concepts for expanding Route 13 north of Kimberling City.

Dale and wife, Carol, will move to the Kansas City area to be closer to the couple’s grandchildren. Carol will continue in her job as a MoDOT paralegal. Dale expects to work part-time as an engineering consultant.

The diehard motorcycle rider summed up his time with MoDOT this way: “It’s been a wonderful ride.”



Bob Edwards

D8 at Work

Trimming ice storm-damaged limbs (top) along the Interstate 44 South Outer Road is Lebanon Maintenance Crew Leader Bennie Foltz, followed by Senior Maintenance Worker Norma Snelling.

Equipment Specialist Tom Kraft (left) works in the District Garage to attach a “thumb” to a backhoe for ice storm cleanup.

Plowing Route 60 at Seymour during a Feb. 1 snow (right) are Seasonal Maintenance Worker Richard Vinson, in lead truck, and Seymour Senior Maintenance Worker Samuel Bishop.

Ice Storm Cleanup Goes On and On

by Angela Eden

Clearing fallen trees, limbs and brush from roadsides remains the focus of District 8 maintenance crews from Clever to Springfield to Walnut Grove, from Wheatland to Buffalo to Lebanon.

“It’s going to be more time consuming than everybody thinks,” said Bolivar-Buffalo Area Maintenance Superin-

tendent Dan Ream. “We’ll be messing with it until the end of the year.”

The mess was caused by a Jan. 12-14 ice storm that hammered southwest Missouri, including all or parts of Christian, Greene, Polk, Hickory, Dallas, Stone, Webster, Wright and Laclede counties. Ice-coated trees fell across overhead wires, cutting power to wide areas. Many lines dropped onto roads.

Through January, electric companies worked day and night to restore power while MoDOT cleared state roads. Then came roadside cleanup. The number-one priority was eliminating safety hazards, keeping more limbs from falling onto the pavement and removing obstacles to visibility.

“We’re focusing on ‘hangers’ (limbs dangling from tree tops over the road) and downed trees next to the roadway,” District Maintenance Engineer Dave O’Connor said in mid-February. Crews then began “chipping up” debris and sawing large limbs to haul away later.

Work to clear roadsides reduced routine winter maintenance operations in ice storm-pounded areas. That meant, for example, less crack-sealing and a diminished sign-replacement program.

Soon crews must begin warm-weather chores, including mowing. That adds a sense of urgency to the cleanup.

Signal, Construction Veterans Retire

by Angela Eden

Senior Signal and Lighting Electrician Bruce Fuller
Service: 33 years (Hired Dec. 24, 1973)

Career: Survey Assistant, Survey and Plans, 1973; District Supply Agent, General Services Stockroom, 1976; Maintenance Worker, Signing/Stripping Crew, 1983; Maintenance Worker, Signal Crew, 1991; Assistant Signal and Lighting Electrician, 1996; Signal and Lighting Electrician, 1999; Senior Signal and Lighting Electrician, 2005

Memorable Work: Satisfaction of stripping a new section of pavement, including a three-lane section of Route 13 between Bolivar and Humansville that

made passing safer until the road was four-laned

Quote: “I take great pride in doing a good job and taking care of my signal area (Nixa and Kimberling City).”

Post-MoDOT Plans: Raising beef cattle on his 500 acre farm; trail riding; spending more time with his children, Jonathan, Rebecca and Rachel

Branson Int. Construction Inspector Chuck Kincaid
Service: 17 years (Hired March 1, 1989)



Fuller



Kincaid

Career: Seasonal Construction Assistant, Springfield Project Office, 1989; Construction Technician, Springfield Project Office, 1991; Construction Technician to Senior Construction Technician, Branson Project Office, 1993-1994; Construction Inspector, Willow Springs Project Office, 1999; Construction Inspector, Branson Project Office, 2001; Intermediate Construction Inspector, Branson Project Office, 2006

Memorable Work: Inspection on the Ozark Mountain Highroad project in Branson; surveying work for the James River Freeway in Springfield

Quote: “I liked everything but the paperwork.”

Post-MoDOT Plans: Travel with wife, Clara; work his 22 acres of brush in eastern Taney County; “Enjoy life.”

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D9

South Central

Information Systems Employees Help During Storm in Dallas County

The January ice storm that struck most of southwest Missouri, sparing the southern portion of the South Central District from the worst of its impact, required swift response from those trained to assist. On Jan. 19, Traffic Liaison Engineer Rick Bennett contacted Information Systems Specialists Larry Woodruff and Chris Miller to request they head for Laclede County with the MEROC trailer to assist with power and Internet needs. Just as quickly as

the ice came, the needs changed and their destination became Dallas County.

While they had been through training, it was their first time to respond to an emergency. The pair traveled through Springfield that Friday night and arrived in Buffalo at approximately 7:15 a.m. Saturday. Precipitation began to fall around 10 a.m. and continued until approximately 2 a.m. Sunday.

“This was on-the-job training,” Wood-

ruff explained. “We had tested the equipment and our abilities back in June during the worldwide HAM Radio event in West Plains, but this experience was an opportunity to learn in adverse conditions, more like what we would be likely to be called out for.”

When Woodruff and Miller arrived at the Dallas County 9-1-1 Center, it took an hour to set up the trailer. Once wire was run from the building to the trailer, temporary Internet was set up and a

wireless network was created to simplify connection. They also set up a schedule to monitor the generator’s fuel usage. At shift change time in the center, Woodruff and Miller checked to see if changes were needed including additional Internet access for employees.

On ready as long as they were needed, Woodruff and Miller slept in the MEROC trailer

on Saturday night. Woodruff said the workers at the center were very appreciative. “We were not sure exactly what they would need from us,” he said. “It is likely bad weather will be what calls us out so it was a good first run and a great learning opportunity.”

Woodruff said they were appreciative of all the help they received. He specifically mentioned General Services Manager Jacky Traw and Superintendent Joe Housewright who saw to it they had a truck to pull the MEROC trailer with. He also said Signal and Lighting Electrician Chris Medley was instrumental. Medley volunteered to drive to Buffalo and help with the equipment as Woodruff and Miller were less familiar with it. Woodruff said Medley’s expertise proved very valuable. In addition, Central Office Traffic Communication Coordinator John Diggs and Senior Traffic Technician Cristifer Kallenbach were onsite and very helpful.

With the lessons learned from this experience, Woodruff and Miller plan to continue training and preparing to respond should they be called upon again.



Larry Woodruff and Chris Miller



Trip Home Turns into Opportunity to Help Design Technician Aids Accident Victim

14 A later than normal trip home turned into an opportunity to be a good Samaritan for Design Technician Steve Belcher. Steve was traveling along South Highway 17 in Howell County around 2 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 31, when something in the darkness caught his eye as he rounded a curve.

With the feeling it was something he should check out, he turned around and headed back. It was a good thing he did.

A teenage girl, who had just been involved in an accident, was lying in a ditch approximately 30 feet from

her car and was yelling for help. Steve called 9-1-1 on his cell phone and sat with her on the side of the road until the highway patrol and paramedics arrived.

“It must have just happened,” Steve explained. “When I turned around to check out what I had seen, there was steam coming off the car.”

According to Steve, the girl had missed a curve and struck a tree, which resulted in her ejection from the vehicle. Her car was missing the front half, from the dashboard forward. Her speedometer

was fixed on 100 miles per hour and her injuries were substantial.

The ribs on her left side were broken and one had punctured her left lung, which collapsed. She suffered brain hemorrhaging and her liver and spleen were bleeding. She also had a broken right leg and lacerations from head to toe.

Following a stay in the hospital, the teenager visited Steve. She commented how his assistance had probably saved her life and thanked him with a hug.

When asked about the incident, Steve said, “Well, I just happened to be in the right place at the right time.”

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Steve Belcher, Design Technician

D10

Southeast

I-57 Sees Brighter Future

by Tonya Wells



A truck enters Missouri from Illinois along southbound Interstate 57. This 11.5-mile section of I-57 will be the first Better Roads, Brighter Future project in the Southeast District.

The Smooth Roads Initiative may be officially over, but Interstate 57 in Mississippi County will be facing a much smoother future this year. Better Roads, Brighter Future is getting underway and in District 10, that means major resurfacing for I-57.

“The pavement is old,” said Project Manager Eric Krapf, “and, it sees a lot of traffic, especially truck traffic. This is a really good thing, and I’m excited we can make this important improve-

ment along I-57 from Illinois through Charleston.”

The reason it’s possible is because of the Better Roads, Brighter Future program, which will accelerate projects to bring 85 percent of the state’s major highway system up to good condition by the end of 2011. About 95 percent of all Missourians live within 10 miles of these busy highways that will receive wider stripes and rumble stripes,

brighter signs, paved shoulders and smooth pavement.

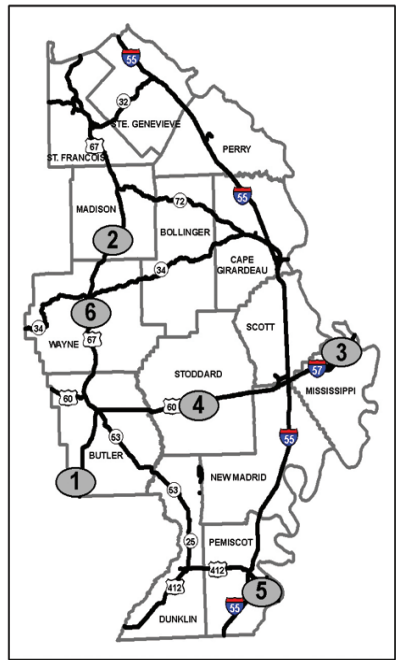
Krapf said I-57 will remain open, but traffic will be shifted to the northbound lanes while work occurs on the southbound lanes, meaning both directions will see only one lane of traffic.

“Try as we might, we just can’t fix a road without the road,” Krapf said. “Unfortunately what that means is that we’ll be inconveniencing the drivers while we work toward getting them a better road on which to travel. We’ve talked with the local legislators and worked with the local chamber of commerce to get direct mail out to business owners, and so far, the response has been appreciative that the work is going to happen.”

MoDOT plans to accept bids for the project in March. If the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission deems those favorable, it could award the project during its April meeting ... so it’s likely work will start this spring on smoother southbound lanes.

Better Roads, Brighter Future

Upcoming District Plans



District 10 STIP Projects that are being accelerated to 2007 and new projects that will be awarded in 2007 include:

- 1: Butler County, Route 67**--Resurfacing from 0.5 mile south of Route 160 to Arkansas state line.
- 2: Madison County, Route 67**--Resurfacing from one mile north of Route A to the Wayne County line.
- 3: Mississippi County, I-57**--Pavement rehabilitation on the southbound lanes from the Mississippi River to two miles south of the Route 105 interchange.
- 4: New Madrid and Butler Counties, Route 60**--Diamond grinding on eastbound lanes from the Stoddard County line to the I-55/57 interchange. In Butler County from Route T to Route 67.
- 5: Pemiscot County, I-155**--Diamond grinding from I-55 to Tennessee state line.
- 6: Wayne County, Route 67**--Resurfacing from Madison County line to four miles south of Butler County line.

All projects provide surface treatments, and striping and shoulder improvements resulting in smoother pavements and safer roadways.

The Better Roads, Brighter Future program will bring 85 percent of the state’s highway system up to good condition by the end of 2011.

Green Places in Top One Percent

Tim Green, equipment specialist, recently participated in the Automotive Service Excellence testing in Cape Girardeau.

Statewide there are 102 equipment specialist who have been through the ASE Masters program. However, Green is



Tim Green

ranked 263 out of 400,000 professional mechanics in the United States.

“This is an outstanding achievement,”

said Mechanic Supervisor Paul Huskey. “We are proud to have Green as part of our Southeast District team.”

The ASE program tests mechanics over all parts of the vehicle including, engine, transmission, suspension, drive train and axles, heating, air conditioning, gas and diesel.

To keep up with the latest technology, the test is updated every fall and spring at various locations throughout the United States.

Green is certified as a Master Auto, Truck and Collision Repair/Refinish Technician.

Joe ‘Joe Bear’ Preyer

Joe Preyer worked in the Southeast District for 29 years, and was just a few weeks from retiring before he passed away on Jan. 15.

He began his career at the Hayti Maintenance Facility and later transferred to the Portageville Facility where he spent most of his career.



Joe Preyer

Supervisor Eugene Davis. “He was well liked by everyone; he would do anything to help anyone that he could. He was a big morale booster around here. He was not only a coworker; he was a friend to us all. He will really be missed.”

“Joe was a dedicated employee who showed a lot of initiative in everything he did,” said Regional Maintenance Supervisor

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Connections

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Alternate Idea for Passing on Missouri’s Highways

by Megan Mills

Trying to pass a slower moving vehicle on a two-lane highway can be both frustrating and dangerous. In order to help make Missouri highways safer and reduce the number of fatalities and disabling injuries that occur each year, MoDOT has embraced the concept of an alternate four-lane design on certain routes.

An alternate four-lane consists of an additional lane added to one side of a conventional two-lane highway to provide motorists an opportunity to pass another vehicle without having to find gaps in the on-coming traffic. The passing lane alternates between the north- and southbound lanes giving motorists from both directions ample opportunity to pass.

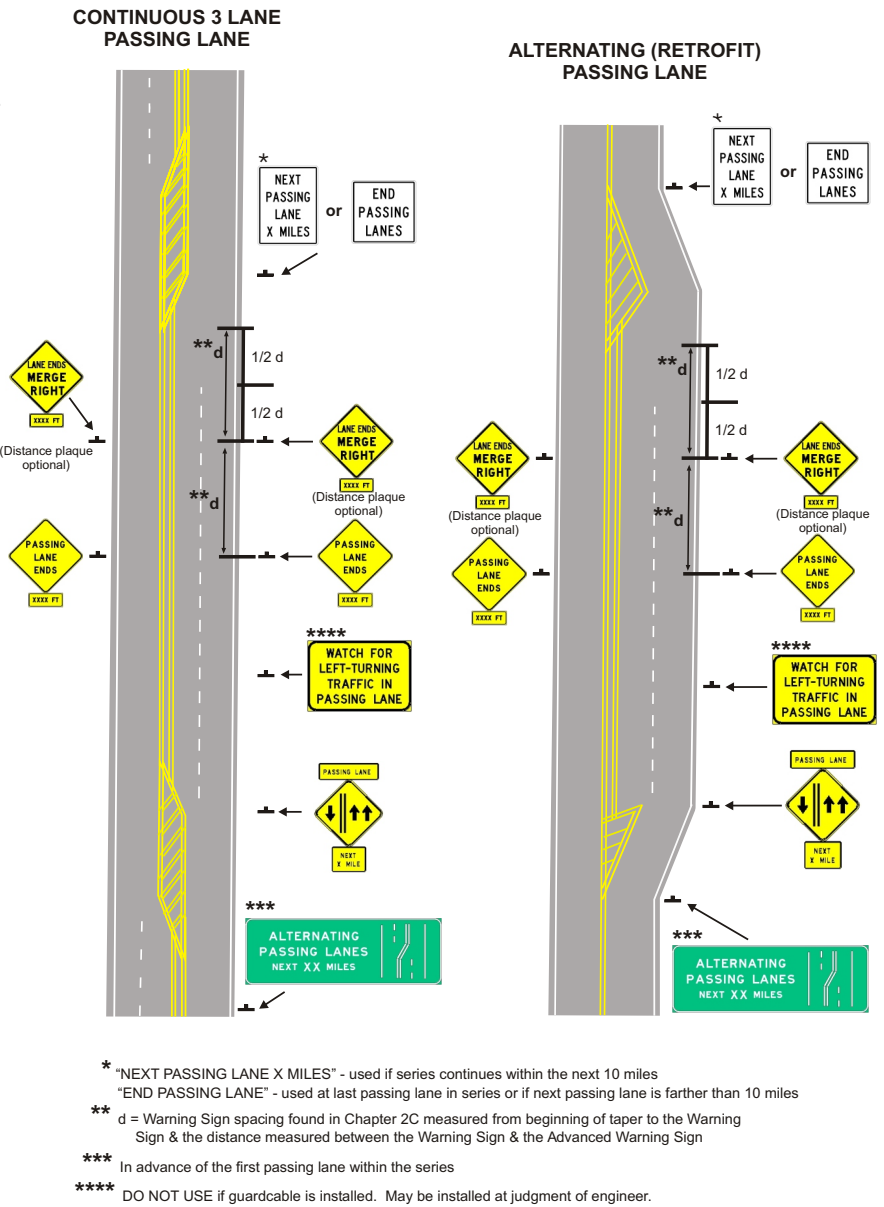
MoDOT installed its first alternate four-lane in November 2005 on Route 37 between Monett and Cassville in District 7 and others are now underway.

Compared to the two-lane passing lane, the alternate four-lane is safer because motorists will never have to drive into a lane with oncoming traffic and it has a paved shoulder and rumble stripe. Plus, the passing lane configuration is much cheaper than constructing four-lane roads.

“These alternating passing lanes will help us reduce the number of fatalities and disabling injuries on our roadways,” said Eileen Rackers, state Traffic engineer. “Many sections where we are installing these alternating passing lanes have a history of motorists making the choice to pass when it is not safe to do so, which can lead to head-on collisions. Head-on collisions are one of the most deadly types of traffic crashes.”

Since the installation of the alternate four-lane, head-on collisions have decreased on this roadway section. Dave Taylor, Traffic operating engineer in District 7, says they will review the segment again next summer since the roadway has a higher traffic volume then.

Other alternate four-lane projects have sprung up in Missouri since the installation of the ones in the Southwest District. District 9 recently completed installation of their own alternating passing lane on Nov. 21 on an 11-mile stretch extending from Houston to Licking in Texas County. Districts 5 and 8 will install a stretch of alternating passing lane on Route 5 south of Camdenton in the summer of 2010.



Signs and Striping Will Improve Safety at New Passing Lanes

by Megan Mills

Although the first alternate four-lane was installed more than a year ago in District 7, it wasn’t until recently that MoDOT developed specific signs and striping that will now alert motorists when they are entering this type of lane configuration.

During summer 2006, a team came up with a plan to alert motorists that they are about to enter an alternating passing lane by using a combination of signs and roadway markings. Striping

and signs were then finally installed along the District 7 project last fall.

The team recommended a 12-inch painted median lined with a 4-inch edgeline to emphasize the opposing traffic directions. Several signs alert motorists of the upcoming configuration, mark the beginning and length of each individual passing lane and alert motorists when the passing lane is ending on both the right and left sides of the roadway. Centerline and edgeline rumble stripes are an additional safety feature to warn

motorists when they are leaving the travel lane.

“These lanes with the new signs and striping will really improve safety and save motorists time at a minimal cost on roadways throughout Missouri,” Rackers said.

The standard procedures regarding signs and striping established in the installation of the District 7 project will be followed on future projects, such as those planned in districts 5 and 9.

